

**From:** Norwood Catron  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/28/02 3:45pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I am an IT professional, specializing in providing Microsoft solutions for small to mid-size businesses. I've worked in the field for four years now, and have used Microsoft operating systems and applications for fifteen years. I've invested considerable time and financial resources in becoming an expert with Microsoft products and have obtained several Microsoft specific certifications. My continued livelihood will continue to depend on Microsoft's dominance in the market.

Having said that, I feel strongly that the currently negotiated settlement does not do enough to punish Microsoft for past anticompetitive behavior or to prevent such behavior in the future.

I don't believe that a break up of the company is a solution. The lines between application and operating system are quickly disappearing. Future technologies will continue to blur those lines. But I feel that Microsoft has used strict contracts with OEM's as well as unnecessary integration of applications into the OS (Internet Explorer in Windows 95/98/ME/2000 and XP, and now Windows Media Player in XP) to hinder consumer choice and competition.

In addition to the solutions already proposed, Microsoft should be forced to open the source code to ALL operating system API's, and quite possibly the entire OS. This would allow competing application developers to successfully create applications that work correctly with Microsoft operating systems. I feel strongly that the inaccessibility of the API information was one of the reasons Netscape, Corel, Novell and other application providers have had such a difficult time distributing bug free software.

Microsoft should also be strictly monitored in terms of its contracts with OEM's and other providers. Currently, if a consumer purchases a new PC from a manufacturer, it is quite literally impossible for the consumer to get one without a Microsoft OS. And if a consumer is successful at such an endeavor, that consumer can not be properly reimbursed from the OEM or Microsoft for the Microsoft software costs that are automatically incorporated into the cost of the PC.

It is imperative that the federal government return the operating system and application market to a more stable playing field. As well it is important that Microsoft make reparations for past wrongs. Please reconsider the current settlement, and come up with more appropriate and harsher consequences. Microsoft must not get off with just a slap of the wrist.

Sincerely,

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